BOULEVARD

Melodic Rock Fanzine: No.2 (july '88)

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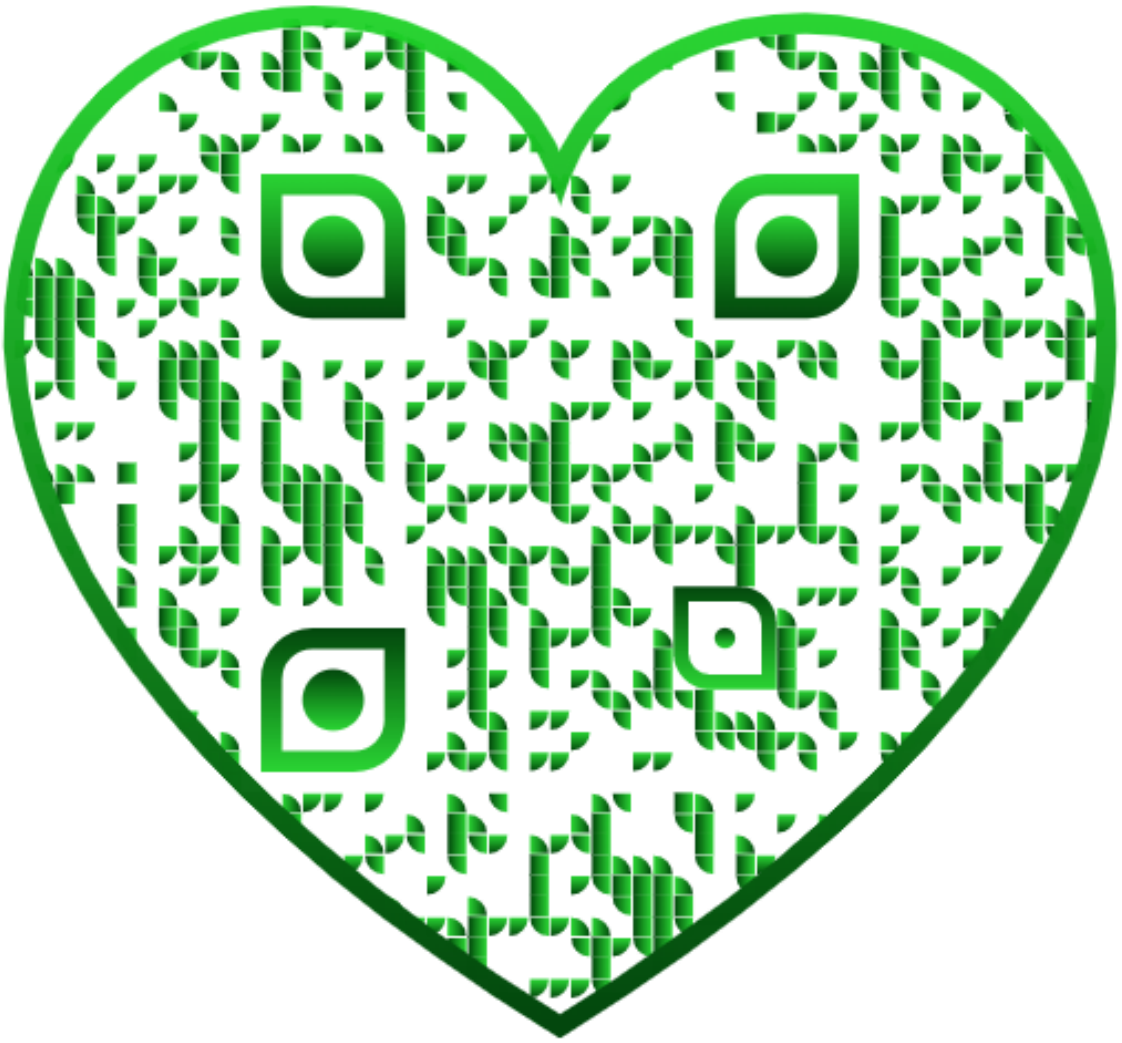
ALBUM REVIEWS
CLASSIC ALBUM REVIEW
KINGDOM COME COMPETITION
FIRST REVIEW OF ALIEN L.P. ANYWHERE!

BAD HABIT :ANOTHER BUNCH OF SWEDISH PRETTY BOYS?OR THE BEST NEW BAND THIS YEAR. FIND OUT INSIDE.YOU MAY GET HOOKED(SIC)



EDITORIAL

Dear Reader,

Well here we are again,albeit a month late.We can only apologise for this and thank you for being so patient.The reason for the issue's delay is that we were promised an interview with a certain big name group(we won't say who but if you look at our ad in KERRANG! it's obvious).The aforementioned group only arrived in this country in early July so we decided to put back the release date for issue 2.The band in question then 'blew out'two pre-arr-anged interviews,without even calling to cancel on the second occasion!

Anyway,we will be back on schedule with the next issue(which will be out in September),and we can already tell you that we will be featurng an inter-view with Mega German Rockers BONFIRE.

As in the Editorial in issue 1,we would like to take this opportunity to offer you our help in searching out any albums which you have been trying to obtain,without success,for some time.We cannot guarantee that we will be able to find all the L.P.'s which you require but we'll certainly try our upmost.

Also,if you write to any of the bands featured in BOULEVARD we would be extremely grateful if you would tell them that we sent ya!

If you wish to write to us with any queries at all,then please do so, but if you would like a reply,then if you could,please include an SAE we would be much happier(you just wouldn't believe our postage expenses).

So,to end,we hope you enjoy issue 2 of BOULEVARD.If you do(or don't) then drop us a line at;

BOULEVARD FANZINE
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The contribution and help of certain people has been invaluable to the success of BOULEVARD.We would like to take this opportunity to thank some of them and express our apologies to any we forget to mention.
SPECIAL THANKS to CHRIS'IMMENSE'LLOYD,MAG SODERKVIST,PHILIPPE PIERQUIN,ANTONIO FERRO for their writing/discoveries.
THANKS TO DEREK OLIVER,CHIP RUGGIERI,KRISTIN GULBRANDSEN,DALE NEWTON,JOSIE WHEELDON,PETER TUOZZOLO and anyone else who has helped us,whether wittingly or by accident!
A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS ALSO TO EVERYONE AT VIBES RECORDS,BURY,FOR PUTTING UP WITH OUR RIDICULOUS ORDERS EVERY SATURDAY.

MJA AND IVJ.

OUTSIDE EDGE-hello America

Having been away from the public eye for well over 2 years,OUTSIDE EDGE are back,sounding more polished and professional than ever.Those of you who bought their admirable debut will know that they specialise in powerful Melodia some-where inbetween DEF LEPPARD and BONJOVI,but the material suffered in the vocal department(supplied,incidentally,by Bass player TOM FARMER)and so they never achieved the success which the songs merited.Inexplicably,the 2nd L.P. entitled "MORE EDGE" was shelved,never to be released for public consumption and OUTSIDE EDGE vanished from sight.

Enter one COLIN PEEL,ex-CANNES,to take up the vocal duties and now we're talking.A brand new 3 song demo was recorded highlighting their fresh,dynamic material.Sadly the demo is not for public release as it's purely to help them obtain a deal but I'll give you a quick resume anyway.

"PASSION" opens the proceedings and sees the boys moving in a new direction.Intense riffs burst forth threatening serious speaker damage,an almost ZEP-like mid section leads into EDDIE GOLGA's thoughtful solo and it all ends up being very original.This is FIERCE stuff!

Following on from "PASSION" is the blindingly brilliant "HOT ON THE HEELS OF LOVE",an absolute cert for a hit if ever I heard one.Deleting anything ever recorded by BONJOVI(I kid you not),the hookline will permeate your senses and leave you whistling it for weeks.Again superior vocals from PEEL shine through taking the material to a higher level of commercial brilliance.

Closing the demo is the heartfelt "CLOSE TO THE FIRE",a supreme slice of AOR balladry.Swirling synths and tearjerking guitar mesh lifting the track to 'epic' status.

I spoke recently with singer COLIN PEEL who explained that the songs were written whilst the band were in DUBAI.He told me that they seemed to flourish in the strange environment and,for him especially,it was a great experience. Almost immediately after our conversation,COLIN explained,OUTSIDE EDGE would be leaving for FRANCE,in order to play a few gigs and write some more songs, before flying out to the US with the intention of securing a deal.He said that they were looking to sign over there first before attempting to put ink to paper in the UK.Who can blame them?Look what becoming established in the US did for DEF LEPPARD and T'PAU's sales over here.Hey,it's in vogue to start an assault on the world from AMERICA before conquering home turf and,believe me,OUTSIDE EDGE have the potential to be at least as big as the aforementioned artistes!

MJA

BAD HABIT-Young and innocent!

I don't know about you,but I can't get enough of the new SWEDISH groups at the moment.There just seems to be more and more each week better than the week before.I mean when you consider the size of the US and the amount of good bands there at the moment(probably less than 2 dozen),then consider a relatively small country like SWEDEN which has churned out the likes of EUROPE,TREAT,DALTON,GLORY,MOGG(R.I.P.),RED HOT,ROULETTE,WHY NOT,DRASTIC MEASURES etc.etc.etc.,in such a short period of time and it begs the question 'just what do they put in the water over there?'

Well now you can add to that ever growing list a stunning outfit called BAD HABIT(there's a joke in there if you think hard enough).Formed around 2 years ago by singer BAX FEHLING and guitarist HAL JOHNSTON(both are AMERICAN born)they have been playing a handfull of gigs locally but mainly they've been gleaning their songs to a standard of perfection seldom heard in a group so young.Eventually,they recorded a demo and then a self-financed E,P, which mega label CBS took them up on and released through their own enormous set-up.

The 6 tracks on offer are all killer classics.Lead off cut "DREAMS DIE HARD" hits the groove perfectly with it's excellent arrangement whicw builds to a crescendo on the chorus highlighted by the superb vocals.

Somewhere beyond WHITE LION,ICON and maybe even a hint of NIGHTRANGER,each track features superlative keyboard/guitar interplay between DOC PAT SHANNON and JOHNSTON respectively(they also produced the E.P.).

CONTD

BAD HABIT,CONT'D

"TRY ME"and "YOUNG AND INNOCENT"are both grandiose slices of Modern Pomp but it's the mighty "NEED SOMEBODY"which steals 1st prize in the 'running for the lavatory' stakes.

Opening with subtle keyboards before bursting into life on JOHNSTON's thick and chunky Powerchords and peaking on the most ball-tweaking chorus I've ever had the pleasure of ruining a pair of trousers to!This track is total WIMP DEATH!God,there's even a hint of BRAD GILLIS(NIGHTRANGER)in the solo. What more could any Thrash fearing wimp possibly ask for?

BAD HABIT are in the studio at the moment,although there appears to be a bit of controversy as to which label they will eventually release their product under as other BIG names have recently shown interest in the boys. This is hardly surprising as they have the talent (and the looks,just take a gander at the cover photo)to conquer the World.I suggest you get in on the act before the teeny-boppers catch sight of them.

CONTACT:LUCKY STAR MUSIC,O VARNSG 9 B,212 18 MALMO,SWEDEN.

MJA

TORA - Best in the (North) West

Up here in the North of England we don't have much to shout about,so when a band with the potential of TORA comes along we tend to go a little ape.On hearing their last demo containing 3 gems of intelligent,original AOR, "IF THIS IS LOVE","CLIMBING THE WALLS"and "WHAT'S BECOME OF YOU",I was,to say the least,impressed.Sounding,to these ears anyway,like a cross between SURVIV -OR and SAGA,with emphasis on the Canuck Gods,Ifelt they had to be worth check -ing out.

The chance to do so came on APRIL 28th at OAK HOUSE,in MANCHESTER and aft -er one or two problems of a vehicular nature,I arrived just in time to catch the whole of TORA's set,which opened with "IF THIS IS LOVE".As I knew the cut already it gave me the opportunity for comparison with their demo performance. The quality of reproduction was amazing,especially considering the obvious set backs of playing in such a small space and the fact that it was only about the 6th gig that tha band had played together as their current line-up of PETER McGUCKIAN(vocals),PETER NORTH(guitar),PAUL WHEELDON(guitar),KEVIN BRANNEY(synths),PAUL LUCAS(drums)and NIGEL BLYTHE(bass).Throughout the set (of 10 songs)the band played so tightly that one could be forgiven for mist -aking them for seasoned old-timers.If I was to say that I had recently prior to that night seen JOHN NORUM,ACE FREHLEY and TED NUGENT,yet TORA's perfor -mance was the one that stayed clearest in my mind,you'd get an idea of how impressed I was.

As well as the 3 demo tracks and the single "DEJA VU",they played some totally mind destroying chunks of bliss as "INSECURITY"(what a chorus!), "NOTHING NEW(SIZE OF MY EGO)"and the only ballad of the night "ALRIGHT BY ME", all of them instantly memorable and containing thoughtful lyrics,all too rare in Rock bands these days.

Amazingly enough,all through the gig I detected an even stronger SAGA inf -luence than on the demo and yet when I mentioned this to JOSIE(their extrem -ely helpful manager and wife of guitarist PAUL WHEELDON)she told me that neither she nor any member of the group were familiar with SAGA's material!

The guys also played 2 songs which were over 18 months old,"YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE"and "TAKE IT EASY"which absolutely reeked of North America without sounding like any band in particular and easily bettering most of the groups from that part of the World!

The only reason that I can see for TORA's lack of a deal is the fact that they don't come from London so A+R men,who never leave the capital,will not Know of their existence.Christ,if dross like WOLFSBANE,THE GRIP and QUIREBOYS get deals and TORA can't then it's about time some heads rolled in the record companies!As you read this piece,TORA are back in the studio cutting a new demo and then surely a deal must follow.A Tidal Wave of talent cannot be ignored indefinately.Write to the band now so you can get in on the ground level of a band destined for the Upper brances of the Rock World!

CONTACT:JOSIE WHEELDON,3 BURGESS DRIVE,FAILSWORTH,MANCHESTER,M35 OEU.

MJA

DAVINCI - NORWAY'S Newest Hope

Released in NORWAY back in January and now finding it's way to these shore's the debut album by DAVINCI has had me in quite a tizz recently.The album just has to be heard to be believed!

Consisting of 4 guys from Oslo,LARS AASS(VOCALS),DAG SELBOSKAR(KEYBOARDS) GUNNAR WESTLIE(GUITAR)BJORN BOGE(BASS) and 1 guy from Volda,JARLE MALOY(DRUMS) the band specialise in power-laden slices of AOR/MELODIA which only EUROPE hav -e yet managed toperfect,or so I thought.

As soon as the opening chords to"LOOKING FOR LOVE" are struck you know you're in the company of something a little bit special.From LARS' superb voca -ls (similar at times to JOEY TEMPEST!)to the ridiculously overblown guitar histrionics of WESTLIE(Forget the over-rated RONNIE LE TEKRO,of TNT,this is easily the best guitarist in NORWAY at the moment)DAVINCI have all bases cover -ed.Take the first ballad "TARQUINIA" for example.Stunning synths intersperse with breathtaking axework leaving you gliding gently back into a chorus which simply deletes "CARRIE"(by EUROPE).You may think I'm going a bit overboard on this lot but you'll just have to listen to the album and find out for yourselv -es won't you?

As if "TARQUINIA" wasn't enough,when you flip the disc over there's "FOR EVER IN MY HEART",which,as soon as the harmony vocal intro is over will have you running for the bathroom.After the intro is a searing solo before 21 year old LARS pours out his heart during the verses before bursting into the best chorus this side of the'permed perfectionists'(EUROPE,of course).GUNNAR also excels himself on this one,performing obscene acts on his chosen instrument (not a pretty site!)before the solo ends with a choppy chord sequence,beaut -iful keyboards and even more glorious harmonies.Good grief,I'm going to have to calm down 'cos I'm running out of superlatives.Suffice to say,this is one opus which justifies every penny of the(ridiculous)import prices.

Since the album's release DAVINCI have been touring the country(NORWAY tha -t is)to crowds of ecstatic fans and thus helping current single "TARQUINIA" toremain in the NORWEGIAN charts for a great deal of time.

I cannot recommend DAVINCI enough so I suggest you rush out now and secure you're copy before they become as big as a certain other SCANDINAVIAN act (who my friends will vouch that I predicted success for about 4 years ago).Somethin -g tells me we won'thave to wait so long this time!

MJA

KIZUM -Antipodean AOR

A 3 piece from AUSTRALIA hardly conjurs up AOR bliss does it ? Well,prepare to be totally blown away by KIZUM,the best band to come from down under since AVI -ON.Theyve been together for 3 years and have already recieved approving nods from the likes of RONNIE JAMES DIO and ROGER GLOVER.Unfortunately the record companies in AUSTRALIA haven't yet picked up on KIZUM but I feel this will be their loss as eventually talent will win through and the guys will get a deal elsewhere.

CONTD

KIZUM CONTD.

Anyway,onto the music.I can't really compare KIZUM to any specific band so I guess they're original.All the songs are danceable and leave you feeling happy with the world.That's not to say that they are throwaway for they are no -t.Take demo opener "STOP THE WORLD"or"THIS IS THE NIGHT" as examples.Superb harmonies wash over you leaving a permanent smile on your face and your feet gently tapping to the uptempo beat.

Apparently live the guys use pre-recorded tapes of their keys which means they must be pretty tight so it's a good job they've got such an excellent drummer in the shape of CHRIS PAUL to keep time.LUKAS OLIVER,on the other hand as well as supplying the aforementioned keys,handles bass and vocal duties, with great aplomb(his voice is perfectly suited for US Radio).To top it all off though we have JUSTIN "JUZZIE" BRIGGS on guitar.Boy,can this guy play ! He comes across like a strange combination of IT BITES and McALPINE(yes, he's that good)and I'll wager he can rock out even more in a live situation than he does on the demo.

The best cuts on their new nine track offering(yes that's nine tracks)are the two previously mentioned songs,a superb ballad "LADY" which grows and grow -s with repeated listening,"SKINTIGHT" and"FIRE AND ICE" which is an immense chunk of AOR bliss.It's hard to believe that the guys aren't American such is the magnitude of this cut.This is a track to be heard at all costs !

Speaking of which,the demo is available for just 8 AUSTRALIAN Dollars(or FIVE Pounds) from the address below.This is an absolute bargain for 9 excellen -t songs,very well recorded and travelling halfway around the world !An amazin -g band,find out for yourself by contacting;

KIZUM
P.O. BOX 38
RIVERWOOD
2210
N.S.W.
AUSTRALIA

MJA

STAGE DOLLS-Waiting In The Wings

I cannot believe that I am writing this piece with the hope of helping STAGE DOLLS to become a household name.After the sheer brilliance of their last L.P. "COMMANDOS" Iwas sure that WORLD domination was just a step away,but I was mis -taken.

The guys all hail from Trondheim in Norway,and released their debut L.P. 3 years ago,which earned them a Grammy nomination.A year later out came the aforementioned "COMMANDOS",an almost perfect slice of North American AOR. Yes,I know they're from Norway butyou wouldn't think it to hear TORSTEIN FLAKNE'S vocals which are at times so similae to BRYAN ADAMS' it's uncanny. The songs themselves,written by FLAKNE are prime slices of AOR.Check out the brilliant title track or "WHO'S LONELY NOW?" ,produced to his usual standard by BJOERN NESSJOE,and you'll be convinced that STAGE DOLLS are American.

BIGTIME RECORDS obviously thought so and they ensured a deal for the L.P.' to be released in the US,where it never quite reached the HOT 100 but shifted 50,000 copies!

The next move for the DOLLS was to tour,which they did for most of 1987 and then they simply disappeared.This means they went into rehearsals for the new album,rejecting piles of FLAKNES songs until they were left with just 9 absolute stormers.Some of the rejected songs ended upon other people's rec -ords such as AINA(see review elsewhere)and one was a big hit for new Swedish hot shots SHA-BOOM.

The result of this slimming down can be heard on the enigmatically titled "STAGE DOLLS" album which simply washes over the listener with wave after wave of quality material.It's hard to believe that the band's major label debut (for POLYDOR)could better "COMMANDOS" but it easily does.Once again BJOERN NESSJOE provides the knob twiddling(?)and a better choice couldn't have been made.NESSJOE is almost a 4th member of the band such is his sympathy with the material.Each track on "STAGE DOLLS" is an absolute AOR gem!Honestly when you hear "STILL IN LOVE","WINGS OF STEEL"(the first two singles)or the utterly magic "LORRAINE" you will be blown away!

CONTD..

STAGE DOLLS (CONTD)

The album was released in March(in Norway)and went into the top 5 within 10 days ,soon approaching 50,000 sales("COMMANDOS" only managed 36,000 in thei -r homeland)and that's a Gold record!The band are currently appearing in all the top magazines,radio shows and have even appeared on Norway's very own TOP OF THE POPS.When the album is released over here(in August)let's hope sales go as well.With major label backing and radio airplay I see no reason why STAGE DOLLS can't become Norway's best export since A-HA!

MJA

BYSTANDER - Shorefire Hits

There has been quite a stir-up in the BYSTANDER camp recently so I thought it was about time for an up-date on one or two things.But first aquick potted his -tory of the band.

Formed originally by BUCKY NAUGHTON and ANDY KIELY as a cover outfit (aren t all US bands?),the guys decided to turn to original material,which they had been writing,in 1987.After winning a Shore area competition sponsored by EAST COAST ROCKER magazine,STARS studios,WHTG-FM radio and PEARL INTERNATIONAL,the band recorded the excellent"NOT SO INNOCENT" album with none other than ALAN DOUCHES(GLEN BURTNICK,GEORGE BENSON,GRAND MASTER FLASH)at the production helm. The story behind their choice of tracks is interesting.Apparently,the guys ren -ted a local club and performed around 30 songs to aselected audience who gave each track a mark.The highest scoring 10 tracks are the ones you will find on the album.Talk about giving your fans what they want!

Other interesting stories surrounding BYSTANDER include the one about BRUC -E SPRINGSTEEN.It's alittle known fact that that the very first time that "DAN -CING IN THE DARK" was ever performed live was at an ASBURY PARK club with BYS -TANDER providing the musical backing!Also on a recent visit to the Shore area BONJOVI andboys actually opened for BYSTANDER before later joining them on the stage for a runthrough of the DOBIE GRAY classic."DRIFT AWAY".

The guys are now recieving help towards their next album in the shape of KRAMER guitars and PEARLdrums to give them that little bit extra in the studio They have also engaged the services of the excellent PARK AVENUE PRODUCTIONSto handle promotion of the group.One of their first moves was to secure a distrib -ution deal with IMPORTANT RECORDS so the "NOT SO INNOCENT" album is now avail -able,on import,in the UK through GREYHOUND soif the likes of FORTUNE,LOVERBOY and I think mostly ROBERT TEPPER are you're cup of tea ,then I can thoroughly recommend BYSTANDER.

The line-up has changed recently and the new album will see the vinyl debu -t of JOHN ALLISON(LEAD GUITAR) and JIMMY CALLAHAN(DRUMS)so it should be inter -esting to see what difference,if any,this makes to the overall BYSTANDER soun -d.I for one will be eagerly awaiting the outcome.

MJA.

JIMMY CALLAHAN

JOHN E. ALLISON

DEMO REVIEWS

TOUR DE FORCE- 3 TRACK DEMO

Aberdeen based Tour De Force have been together in their present form since last September playing round their hometown and building up a cult foll -owing.Their 1st demo displeased the band so much that it was withdrawn but this new one is described by drummer COLIN CHAPMAN as a "stormer".

Opening up with "LOVING YOU ANYWAY",a great song with excellent harmonies, the demo then continues with "JOANNE"(the standout track for my money).Summer -time synths melt into a song not a million miles removed from PEROUX or RUN -AWAY territory.You know the sort of thing,layer upon layer of vocal harmonies ,a catchy chorus and a solo you just know you've heard before but you just don -'t care!Gteat stuff!

"SHOOT HER ON SIGHT" follows on from where "LOVING YOU ANYWAY" left off and whilst I prefer "JOANNE" to either of these 2,it has to be said that the guys can certainly "rock out" when they want to."SHOOT HER ON SIGHT" fairly races along and features a solo of epic proportions,provided by NODS GRAHAM. This is the sort of track which would really get an audience fired up in a live situation which is apparently where TOUR DE FORCE are at their best.Any band which includes NIGHTRANGER covers in their set just has to be worth check -ing out,eh?

CONTACT:GARETH DAVIES,12 ROSEWOOD AVENUE,ABERDEEN,AB1 4DE,SCOTLAND.

MJA

EXPRESS- CASSETTE ALBUM

Formed from the ashes of KARRIER,Midlands based EXPRESS have come up with an excellent cass-album featuring 9 well performed slices of melodic rock with the occasional stab at Pomp.Original members TIM MANFORD(GUITAR),RAY HORTON (DRUMS),and ANDY JENKINS(BASS)have been joined by MARK BREECHER(VOCALS)and PAT HATFIELD(KEYS)moulding their influences,namely JOURNEY,SURVIVOR,ICON, TOUCH and LIONHEART,into a sound of their own.

The only quibble I have is that at times the vocals are a mite strained.I would suggest that BREECHER sticks to the more mid-range style exhibited on killer cut "CRYING TO THE NIGHT"(soon to be released on a single)rather than attempting to be STEVE PERRY,for as we all know their is only one PERRY.

Apart from this minor upset though EXPRESS' material is very strong esp -pecially when they Pomp it up on tracks like "I'M RUNNING" and "COLD AS STEEL which are similar to LIONHEART oreven VIRGINIA WOLF at their best(i.e. on thei -r debut L.P.).The other major track is the power ballad "ENDLESS SHADOW"which highlights MANFORD'S guitar prowess in a fashion not heard since the sad demis -e of THIN LIZZY!

Although EXPRESS are very inexperienced live,I'm sure that with a few more gigs under their belts they will become a major force in the UK AOR scene.They are about to set out on a short tour so why not check them out?See KERRANG! fo -r exact dates.

If you want to purchase the cass-album then send a cheque for just 3 pound (payable to TIM MANFORD)to:TIM MANFORD,74 ASHLEY STREET,BILSTON,WEST MIDLANDS, WV14 7NN.

MJA

Y- 2 TRACK DEMO

Hopefully by now you should all be familiar with Y.Their background and a review of their 1st demo can be found in AOR BASEMENT NO.3.If not however here's a brief resume.The group was formed around the core of BILL BAXTER (BASS and VOCALS)and ROGER FILGATE(GUITAR)who re-located to Los Angeles in order to find suitably prefficient musicians to complement themselves.This took 18 months but eventually they settled on GUY MATURO(DRUMS) and PHIL DI -MASO(KEYS).A debut demo found favour with other musos but the guys decided to move in a more commercial direction for their next effort.A 4 track affair fol lowed with Y still technically brilliant but with an added edge of commerciali -ty which turned opening cut "WHEN YOU FALL IN LOVE "into an amazing amalgam of BOSTON,ARCANGEL and AMBROSIA!

Not since the early 80's had such harmonies been heard.

Anyway onto 88 and things are happening on the Y front(sorry).Plans for

CONTD

Y(CONT'D)
a single have now been scrapped in favour of a contribution to a compilation C.D. of unsigned acts titled "THE ALBUM NETWORK". this will be distributed to all major labels and 200 radio formats all over the US.The track in question "YOU ARE THE ONE" is stunning!Far simpler than previous material by Y and devo -id of any solo,this track is also aided by the fact that it was Digitally Mas -tered at FUTURE DISC(just look through your back catologue to get an idea of the quality of their work).A new addition to the Y-team is also featured on the new material.MARK PALADINO,owner of the "EDGE" studio in L.A.has been draf -ted in to help out with engineering and producing in the future.

The other new track is "HEAR ME"and is the bands 1st attempt at the ballad format.Possibly a bit too long for radio play,the song is still a stormer,with the usual high class harmonies and musicianship.

The band hope to put together an E.P. of their material which should be available in August and I for one can't wait.It will be refreshing to hear a band playing true Pomp instead of the usual melodic rock which gets labelled as Pomp by people who don't know the meaning of the word!

CONTACT:BAXTER/FILGATE,1920 S.BATSON AVE,252 ROWLAND HEIGHTS,C.A.91748,USA

MJA

CLEOPATRA -7"SINGLE

If ever a single deserved to be successful then this is the one!All the proceeds will go towards helping local girl TANYA DONALDSON to fly to America in order to recieve treatment for a rare and crippling disease.In fact,so rare is the complaint that it has been named DONALDSON's SYNDROME after little TANY -A.The band have even played charity gigs for the appeal which has so far rais -ed over £5,000 towards helping this poor child.

Anyway onto the vinyl which is an accomplished effort for a debut single. Lead guitarist JONATHAN BAKER told me recently that the tracks had been mixed down somewhat in order to hopefully appeal to a wider audience,but I can't hear any major problems.

First track up is "STANDING ON THE EDGE OF A HEARTACHE"(without a doubt the 'title of the year' so far)and what a slab of melodic mayhem we have on our hands here!A superb pastiche of everything that's good about the throwaway songs of the likes of BONJOVI and WHITE LION."RUNAWAY" style keyboards usher in ADRIAN DAVIDSON's excellent vocals.Honestly this is the sort of stuff that Rock D.J.'s should be playing instead of total crap like GUNS'N'ROSES.The floo -rs would never stop vibrating to the driving beat.The keyboard hook and solo ,by BAKER,are also worthy of your attention.

Flip the single over and we find"DON'T TAKE IT AWAY",a ballad written specially for TANYA,and it's not a bad effort ethier.Moody keyboards(provid -ed by TIM COOPER)ease the song along as DAVIDSON emotes;

"I'm gonna have to fight for you
But we'll make it through somehow"

Brave men will choke-up and more importantly TANYA will be saved!I urge you to buy this record for 2 very good reasons;

(1)To help save a childs life
and (2)Because CLEOPATRA are an excellent professional outfit who given time will be able to compete with their heroes(Christ,they're already a darned site more exciting than WHITE'let's re-re-release"WAIT"'LION!)

The single,priced £1.50,is available from;

JONATHAN BAKER,RING SHEFFIELD 310924(Unfortunately Jonathan has just moved house and I don't have his new address but if you give him a ring he'll be able to give you the details.Go for it!)

MJA

LARØCHE-4 TRACK DEMO

LARØCHE were formed almost 3 years ago now by MARTI LAWRENCE(GUITAR) and NIXIE GILBERT(KEYS)with the purpose of utilising their classical training but still hopefully retaining a sense of fun. Well they've certainly managed that on their latest demo,4 tracks of blistering melodies very much in the WHITE SISTER/GIUFFRIA mould with,to my ears anyway,a keyboard sound taken straight from JOURNEY's "FRONTIERS" album.

CONT'D

LARØCHE CONT'D

Unfortunately,the guys have had many problems on the vocal front(now into double figures I believe!)and,in fact,the demo on offer was recorded with DAVE VANDERVALL doing the honours whereas the line-up now features PETE MARTIN -E,so unfortunately I can't give you any details of how the new boy sounds.

Anyway,onto the demo.Opener "HOLDING BACK" is actually similar to DOKKEN in places but is softened by the use of keyboards.(which are excellent through -out)This track gives way to the demos real winner "HIGH SCHOOL LOVE".Complex chords give an aura of tension to the material,which gives the song a tough edge.I'd like to hear this one given a MIKE STONE or KEVIN ELSON production job!

Following on is the short,but sweet,ballad "LIVING A LIE" on which VANDER -VALL is really at his best.Last track "RICH GIRLS" shows that the guys have a good sense of fun.The intro solo is provided by ANDY DE CROIX and just goes to show the quality of musicianship within LARØCHE.

Everyone I know has compared the band favourably with WHITE SISTER and GIUFFRIA,so come on,let's give the UK something to cheer about.

The demo is available for £2.00 from;ST.HELLIER,CHURCH LANE,UNDY,NEWPORT, GWENT,WALES.

MJA

TOK-IO ROSE-4 track demo

If I was to say that a band with a name as dodgy as TOK-IO ROSE were one of the best unsigned acts in the UK at the moment then you'd probably say I was talking utter rubbish,but believe me,just one listen to their latest demo would change your mind!Featuring 2 tracks which you may already be familiar with viz "JULIE ANN" and"DOESN'T MATTER"(both very similar totheir previous outing,with new solos added)and 2 newer,better cuts.

"TIME" opens the proceedings with an almost QUEENSRYCHE-like intro before bursting into a perfect piece of Melodic Mayhem,giving singer CHRIS MOORE a chance to exercise his lungs.I sincerely believe him to be the strongest vocal -ist in Britain at the current moment.If you are a fan of powerful,yet melod -ic,singers such as KAL SWANN(LION)and DAVID COVERDALE,then youre gonna love this guy.

Next up is the aforementioned "JULIE ANN"which is an excellent commercial rock song,but it's the 3rd track "FOLLOW YOU" which really excites my taste buds.Building on a nice keyboard intro(provided by MARTIN PEARSON,ex JINX)the guys let fly with an absolute gem of a track which deletes anything recently recorded by Q5 or LION.I kid you not!This is the time when new boy guitarist STEF CHALMIS,really shines.What a find he's been for the band,coming on like a cross between JOEY TAFFOLA and STEVE VAI.He could very well be the find whic -h gives TOK-IO ROSE that extra little 'something' to compete with the big boys.Check out the solo on last cut "DOESN'T MATTER" if you have any doubts as to his ability.VAI would be proud to put his name to this workout such is the quality of this man's ability.

The demo is available for a meagre £2.00 from the address below.I strongly urge you to drop them a line.

CONTACT:TOK-IO ROSE,c/o NEW BOGEYS ROCK CLUB,1-7 PENARTH ROAD,CARDIFF.

MJA

CRYWOLF -4 track demo

Currently touted as one of the best bands to come out of L.A. in a long while,CRYWOLF's new demo highlights their strongly cutting commercial edge and,quite simply deletes the opposition.A 4-piece group consisting of TIMMY HALL(VOCALS),STEVE McKNIGHT(GUITARS),PAUL CANCILLA(DRUMS)and PHIL DECKARD (BASS)one is slightly taken aback when "ROAD TO RUIN"opens with an almost Pomp-esque keyboard intro before slipping into a riff not too far removed from AUTOGRAPH's "TURN UP THE RADIO".This is good stuff,serious guitarwork and stab -bing riffs from McKNIGHT really drive home the AUTOGRAPH comparison.

CONTD

"DIRTY DOG NIGHT"also begins with an AUTOGRAPH influenced riff and is just about the perfect party song.Again driven along by the exemplary drumming of CANCILLA.This track RAGES!

"ON THE RUN"and "BACK TO YOU"though positively reek of STRYPER at their absolute best.Glorious harmonies and superb guitarwork,without the overblown sickly lyrical warblings of the SWEET-ones.

You too can get your hands on this demo by contacting CRYWOLF,C/O KENT COOPER,4 AM COMMUNICATIONS,10700 SANTA MONICA BLVD,SUITE 4-368,LA,CA,90025,usa MJA

THE LADDER-2 track demo

1986 was a very disappointing year for AOR releases.Only the likes of ALFIE ZAPPACOSTA,B.E.TAYLOR and of course JOURNEY,produced satisfying slices of Melodic Rock.However,one act who caught our attention were a band from Amer -ica called THE LADDER.They released a fantastic debut L.P. full of modern and more importantly original Pop/Rock tunes which recieved rave reviews in just about every Rock Music mag.Unfortunately,like so many other great bands,the label lost faith and dropped them,leaving them in the lurch.

Almost 2 years have elapsed now and I'm pleased to announce that THE LADD -ER are still going strong,sadly minus a record deal but with a cracking 2 track demo which is in much the same vein as their magnificent debut.

Unfortunately I don't have a bio so I can't tell you if the line-up has changed at all,but it doesn't sound like it.Vocalist and main man FRANK MANCAN -O is certainly still there that's for sure.This guy has an incredible range and he's able to reach every note with ease.

"INHERIT THE WIND"gets us under way in fine style and immediately your mind wanders back to the songs "LIE TO ME"and "DOUBLE SHOT OF LOVE"from the 1st album.A marvelous cut with killer harmonies and pretty much everything to rate it as a classic.I'd go as far as to say that it's their finest song to date!And the chorus,IMMENSE!

The 2nd and final track is "ALL IN THE PIECE".Aslightly more uptempo aff -air.It begins with an intro not a million miles away from "TIME SOLDIER".In fact you'd swear it was!A track well worthy of your attention.

There's quite a religious feel to both of these songs so whether they've found religion or not is open to speculation.The demo is produced quite beatifully and everything is pretty much audible.

There's no doubt in my mind that THE LADDER will have no problem in find -ing a deal so let's hope it doesn't take too long.Until then.

CL

CHINATOWN-2 track demo

Chosen the K-ROCK RUMBLE CHAMPIONS in 1986,Long Island based CHINATOWN have re-emerged with a totally new line-up(bar Leader/guitarist BRUCE FURY)and a brand new demo.The sound and image of the band is based very much on the str -eet,in fact,they claim to be a street fight band who play songs with a strong melodic content,which is fair comment from what I've heard.

The tape gets under way with the excellent,though cliched "WHEN WE ROCK" which displays similarities to powerful Melodic Rock outfits like LIONand mayb -e just a hint of VINNIE VINCENT.Strong vocals and an instantly memorable chor -us leave me hungry for more.Unfortunately though the 2nd track is a cover.I personally don't see the point of this as I'd much rather hear another track penned by the guys themselves,especialy as the choice of covers is "PAINT IT BLACK"which has already been covered by just about everyone and his dog.When you also consider the fact that I hate the STONES'material,it would appear tha -t the guys have lost my attention.But no,the arrangement and passion display -ed keeps my interest up so I must congratulate CHINATOWN on their effort.

All in all,a good professional prospect for the future and I'll be very interested in hearing more material by CHINATOWN at the earliest possible opportunity.In the meantime though the demo is available from BRUCE FURY, 33-09 31st AVENUE,LONG ISLAND CITY,NEW YORK,11106,USA.Go for it!

MJA

SWEDISH EROTICA-4 track demo

It really amazes me the amount of quite brilliant bands coming from the Continent at the moment.Some of these you'll no doubt be familiar with viz EUROPE,TNT,FATE,and more recently BONFIRE,TREAT,DALTON and CHINA.But believe me when I say that there are even more incredibly hot SCANDINAVIAN acts with amazing potential that are capable of showing even the above bands a thing or two.One of these being a young 4-piece from Gotenburg inSweden called,rather strangely,SWEDISH EROTICA.No,I haven't a clue about their monicker either. (I think it's the name of a Blue Movie actually CHRIS,or at least that's what IAN tells me!MJA)Well SWEDISH EROTICA have been around for a couple of years now and they've had their fair share of line-up changes.It really is unbelieve -able that no labels have picked up on them yet as these guys have the potent -ial to be.huge.They've recorded a few demos ranging from AOR to more raunchy stuff and even the odd Glam hint on occasions.

In my possesion is their latest 4 song demo of the highest quality which has had me itching to write more about the band.So let's take a look at the tape in a bit more detail.Opening cut is "LOADED GUN"(originally titled "SHOT BY LOVE")and instantly you know you've got one hell of a band here.Great guita -r sound,full of power riffing(remember WHITE LION'S "FIGHT TO SURVIVE and TREAT'S "PLEASURE PRINCIPLE" L.P:'s?)and a great chorus that you'll be singing along to after a single play.

Next up is the best cut on the tape,a wnderful rocker called "DOWNTOWN". Sensational vocals,courtesy of ANDERS AXX(nice name).Believe me this guy sings the pants off MIKE TRAMPwho is constantly raved about.Incidentally this song deletes anything recently recorded by BONFIRE or TREAT and you can't get much better than that can you?

"LOVE ON THE LINE" continues in typical SWEDISH EROTICA style.It's this particular song however which does appear to have a slight GLAM influence. The mid-section slowing right down to almost ROTH-era VAN HALEN.Hear it and you'll see what I mean.

Finally there's "BREAK THE WALLS" where the boys show just who their influ -ences might be.There's a distinct WHITE LION/DOKKEN feel to the song and even a JOHN NORUM style vocal.A real cracker of a song to finish with and a monstro -us solo to boot!

It's very hard to pick out any faults within the band.The overall sound is a fantastic mixture of WHITE LION,DOKKEN and,dare I say it(yes go on dare,MJA) MOTLEY CRUE,but don't let that put you off,aimed very much at the US sound of the mid 80's.If there's any justice in this world of ours then SWEDISH EROTICA will be stars so get tuned in now!

CONTACT:SWEDISH EROTICA,C/O ANDERS AXX,4 DE LANGATTON 17,S-31428,GOTENBURG SWEDEN.

CL

THE CREEK-4track demo

THE CREEK have been lying low for the past couple of years or so,since their last L.P.,the dissapointing "THE CREEK"(MFN).Sure,the last album cont -ained some great moments within it's grooves,but it just wasn't the same band that I had grown to love through 2 of the finest Pomp L.P.'s ever,"FORTUN -E"and "ROCK THE NIGHT AWAY".So,when a copy of their latest demo found it's way into my hands I was a bit sceptical about even playing it.

Before I go any further though I'd better let you know one or two things that are going on in the CREEK camp.Currently they are without a deal and are,in fact, no longer called THE CREEK.A few names are being discussed althou -gh the name WHITE RHINO looks an almost certainty.There's also been acouple of line-up changes.Guitarist/vocalist MICHAEL HEDGES has rejoined the band after a 3 year absence and out of the group goes drummer LYNN SAMPLES,to be replaced by JOHN HALWELL who joined a few months ago.

Right,onto the tape,which has restored my faith in the band.4 stunning cuts which have to rank as some of their best songs ever.

"PASSION"is first off.Beginning with a nice acoustic intro,the track build -ing into a monster,featuring more guitarwork than I think they have ever employed previously.TIM CLARK's vocals are also superb and it's a pity he's not more well known as he's a fine singer.

CONT'D

THE CREEK CONT'D

"BAD LIGHT"is next.A real punchy song with pumping bass play.This track features JERRY WEST on vocals but the difference is hardly noticeable.Perhaps that explains the quality of the harmonies throughout the demo.

By the time the 3rd song arrived,I really thought it couldn't get any better.Well,as usual,Iwas wrong."ON MY WAY" is like old CREEK,sounding as if it could have come straight off FORTUNE or "ROCK THE NIGHT AWAY".It's the most uptempo track on the demo and the musicianship and harmonies are superb.

The best song though is saved for last(why do bands always do this ?),the bombastic "GIRL IS CRYING".this is possibly their best track ever,it's almost certainly their heaviest.The keyboard intro reminds me distinctly of something that the greatest Pomp band ever ROADMASTER would have done.Add onto this a riff so heavy that I thought my speakers were gonna blow and you can imagine that it's a killer song that has put THE CREEK firmly back on the right track.

With an album already recorded and due for release later in the year,THE CREEK,or should I say WHITE RHINO,are soon to be gracing us once more and playing some delightful Pomp Rock for us all.

If the demo is anything to go by,then it's gonna be one huge record 'cos they've never sounded so good.

CONTACT:THE CREEK,c/o FISHER AND ASSOCIATES ENTERTAINMENT INC.,2238 PARK ROAD,CHARLOTTE,NORTH CAROLINA 28203,USA.

CL

FREELANCE-4 track demo

In the face of the Scandinavian onslaught,very few US acts are currently emerging of any real quality.Thankfully this may all be changing with the appearance on the scene of FREELANCE.Unbelievably the guys average age is a paltry 18 and their first demo was recorded on a 16 track deck in one of the members bedrooms!That demo was an excellent debut effort full of sparkling keyboards.and some of the best harmonies I've heard since the great TOUCH split up all those years ago.The songs also belied the guys age especially the ballad "I DON'T WANNA WANT YOU" which showed a depth of talent not often seen in a band like FOREIGNER,let alone a bunch of kids!It is one of my ambitions to hear this track on C.D.

Hot on the heels of that demo comes their latest 4 song offering.Much more emphasis has been placed on the guitars of JAC MANDEL and ROGER SOMMERS (who also handles the singing duties)but the quality is still there,in fact the guys have even found time to improve.

"GUILTY" rips from the speakers,a classic attention grabber.Superb harmonies and stabbing guitar runs take the band into BONJOVI/DOKKEN territ -ory although FREELANCE are more AOR than either of these 2 groups.The solo though sounds uncannily similar to "IN MY DREAMS",by DOKKEN,but still the song is a killer and keeps the old foot tapping throughout.

The DOKKEN connection is continued on "LIGHTNING STRIKES",a slow plodding affair on which,I must admit,my attention wavered.The mid section especially sounds extremely influenced by DOKKEN.

"IN YOUR EYES"rescues things though.What a stormer!The 'up till now' quiet keyboards burst in and MANDEL's riffing is truly inspired.The track builds slowly into the greatest chorur I've heard since the TOUCH L.P. first found it's way onto my deck.In fact,such is the quality of this song that it could sit alongside "DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT LOVE IS?"and "LAST CHANCE FOR LOVE" quite easily,as it is just that type of track.Again it is the harmonies which will win you over.It's just so difficult to imagine that a bunch of teenagers are capable of such greatness.

Closing cut "KEEP THE FIRE BURNING"again brings the keys to the fore. The intro sounds familiar but I can't place it,so I could be wrong.Anyway, FREELANCE soon dispel any doubts I had as to their originality with yet anoth -er dose of AOR mayhem.

FREELANCE play brilliant AOR songs with emphasis on the stupendous harmony arrangements and awesome choruses(should that be chorii?)They will not be with -out a deal for much longer,I'm sure so all I can add is "WELCOME BACK USA"

CONTACT:FREELANCE,c/o PAUL SUTER,5131 DENNY AVENUE,SUITE 3,NORTH HOLLYWOOD CALIFORNIA 91601,USA.

MJA

ALBUM REVIEWS

BONNIE TYLER-HIDE YOUR HEART(CBS)

BONNIE TYLER-you either love her or hate her and I am in the former group. Not simply because she is a beautiful woman,but for the simple reason that she has been making fantastic AOR albums for some time now.

Her 2 previous albums featured the production talents of JIM STEINMAN and so suffered slightly from pomposity,but now by utilising the writing/producing ability of DESMOND'here's a hit'CHILD she has come up with a fine slab of comm -ercial rock.

Opening track "NOTES FROM AMERICA",a song all about life on the road sees BONNIE in blistering form,her voice deep and raunchy,with JOHN McCURRY's guit -ar gliding powerfully throughout-it's a winner all the way!

"TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT YOUR HEART" was co-written by CHILD and MICHAEL(DROO -L,DROOL)BOLTON)and,yes,just from seeing those names together you know it's going to be a killer."SHY WITH YOU" and"STREETS OF LITTLE ITALY"are 2 excellen -t AOR ballads,which again highlight BONNIE's superb vocals.To finish the L.P. BONNIE pays tribute to one of her childhood heroines JANIS JOPLIN in the form of "TURTLE BLUES",which features some tasty guitar from McCURRY.

So,yet again,BONNIE has delivered the goods,and we haven't even mentioned the best track "HIDE YOUR HEART".Co-written by the mouthwatering combination of DESMOND CHILD/PAUL STANLEY/HOLLY KNIGHT,this is what all singles should sound like.The catchiest song I've heard since BONJOVI's "YOU GIVE LOVE A BAD NAME"(which incidentally was the most blatant steal from BONNIE's own "IF YOU WERE A WOMAN"from her last L.P.)

Don't miss out on this album due to previous bias.Buy it and enjoy it!

IVJ

YNGWIE J. MALMSTEEN-ODYSSEY(POLYDOR)

This one provided a problem.We'd all heard that MALMSTEEN had changed his style to incorporate a more commercial angle never previously explored by the guitar supremo,so has it worked?Well,yes and no(that's what I like to see, positive decisions!MJA)

Yes,because new boy(SIC)JOE LYNN TURNER has brought a new dimension to the music making it more radio-orientated,but no,because sometimes there is still a tendency for MALMSTEEN to over-indulge.I mean,do we really need 3 instrumentals on this L.P.?I don't think so.

That gripe asidethough,I still believe him to be the best guitarist in the world and "ODYSSEY" to be anexcellent melodic rock L.P.

Side one opens up withthe utterly magic "RISING FORCE" on which the criminally under-rated JOHANSSEN brothers play with a serious passion.It's the single though "HEAVEN TONIGHT" which highlights(and we're not just talk -ing hairstyles here folks.MJA)the new found commerciality.Opening with nice accapella vocals a la BONJOVI/DAVE LEE ROTH,the song really takes MALMSTEEN in -to new territory.EXCELLENT!

The side ends with my fave cut "RIOT IN THE DUNGEONS".Another superb chor -us from TURNER and some of MALMSTEEN's best ever guitarwork make this one a classic.

On side 2 we find "DEJA VU" blasting from the speakers.Thundering drums and viscious vocals letting rip with a vengeance but it's the softer "CRYSTAL BALL"which you will be humming for weeks.What a chorus!"FASTER THAN THE SPEED OF LIGHT" comes across like a long lost brother of RAINBOW's "DEATH ALLEY DRIVER"and if you liked that track you'll love this one.

So,to sum up,TURNER has brought an added depth to the music,helping it become more a feeling of 'songs featuring solos' rather than vice-versa.I still feel there's room for improvement though so I'll recommend this one but foresee that the next one will be the killer(if they stay together,that is)

IVJ

BLVD-BLVD(MCA)

I suppose we had to review this one really as the guys have chosen the same name as ourselves and,quite sensibly,play the kinda music we love.Being Candian AOR-sters they will have to follow in the footsteps of such acts as HONEYMOON SUITE,HAYWIRE and BRICKLIN(the 3 bands they sound most like)

This is an L.P. you will have to give your full attention because,at first the tracks may go over your head and then,later,because you won't want to miss a single note due to the expert musicianship and production.

"DREAM ON" opens the proceedings and is a superb slice of Pop/Rock with an immense(© CHRIS LLOYD)hookline and great basswork supplied by RANDY BURGESS (this man is phenomenal)."WESTERN SKIES"with it's soaring synths and solid guitar(similar in a way to HAYWIRE'S "BLACK AND BLUE")stands out as does "IN THE TWILIGHT"where the band delves into GLASS TIGER territory.Turn the opus over and the crystal clear production work of PIERRE'BAZ'BAZINET really helps tracks like "UNDER THE MOONLIGHT" and "YOU AND I" become prime slices of AOR.

Album killer has to be "MISSING PERSONS".Driven along by BURGESS'bass work the track sounds almost like modern day YES on the chorus.Real AOR perfection this one.

It just leaves me to say that a band with a name so good just has to be excellent,don't they?

IVJ

VINNIE VINCENT-ALL SYSTEMS GO(CHRYSALIS)

This one might seem a strange choice to be given a review in BOULEVARD, perhaps a bit too 'heavy' for our delicate ears,you may think,but let me tell you,ther's enough prime melodic rock and AOR balladry to keep you running to t-he bathroom every minute or so.

from the opening strains of "ASHES TO ASHES"with it's ZEP-like vocals and a great(shouldn't that be 'grate'MJA)chorus you can see where VINNIE is headin-g."DIRTY RYTHM" follows and is exactly the sort of track that crap like GUNS 'N'ROSES,FASTER PUSSYCAT et al can only dream of writing.Sleazy street rock with a serious gutter feel.Next comes the 1st real killer "LOVE KILLS".VINNIE has really done the business on this one,a supreme AOR ballad which gives the new singer MARK SLAUGHTER the chance to show us what he's made off."THAT TIME OF YEAR" is the next truly amazing cut and I would wager that you'll not hear a better Melodic Rock song this year.One of the all-time greatest hooklines and VINNIE'S emotion squeezed guitar really make this a classic.Also worthy of mention are "ECSTACY"featuring the best harmonies this side of the BEACH BOYS(!!)and "DEEPER AND DEEPER",an excellent melodic rocker about....well I'll leave it up to you to work out!

Even if you're a straight ahead AOR fan with no metallic leanings I'm sure you'll like this LP,in fact,your collection cannot be considered complete with-out "LOVE KILLS","ECSTACY"and especially"THAT TIME OF YEAR".so you'll have to buy it won't you?

Oh,by the way,the C.D. version features 3 extra cuts;"STAR SPANGLED BANNER", and "YA KNOW-I'M PRETTY SHOT"are a cover version and a RIK EMMET/VAN HALEN sty-le acoustic solo respectively and "THE MELTDOWN"is just a 2 minute drum solo so save your money unless you're a C.D. freak.Buy the L.P. though 'cos it's a belter!

IVJ

KINGDOM-LOST IN THE CITY(FRONTROW)

Well,here you have it,music to get drunk to.And why not?This L.P. is an excellent party time melodic rock opus in the same vein as,say. EUROPE,BONFIRE and SINNER.

KINGDOM consists of 4 germans and 1 briton,they are FREDDY DIEDRICHS(DRUMS CLIFF JACKSON(GUITARS),AXEL RITT(GUITARS)VOLKER SASSENBERG(KEYS) and BERNIE KOLBE(BASS AND LEAD VOCALS).

The album bursts into life with the title track and what a song!A brillian-t keyboard intro(shades of EUROPES "FINAL COUNTDOWN",here)which blasts into a wonderfully boppy chantalong cut.You can almost hear the beer glasses chink

CONT'D

KINGDOM-CONT'D
-ing together on this one.
"THE RUN" follows on with good fluent guitars and a strong driving rythm section but never quite lives up to the opening track.In fact,not until 4th cut "SIGN FROM YOUR HEART"does the album really catch light again.I'd swear that I can hear ZENO's MICHAEL FLEXIG singing in the background on this one. Come to think of it,the track sounds uncannily similar to much of ZENO's early work.
Side 2 starts with the UFO soundalike "RIDING THROUGH THE NIGHT"which agai -n is the best cut on the side although closers "ON THE LINE" and "BACK FROM HELL" are both quite good.The L.P. is helped by a strong production from band member CLIFF JACKSON and I reckon,all in all,"LOST IN THE CITY" is an album to look out for,especially if you're planning a party!

IVJ

QUEENSRYCHE-OPERATION MINDCRIME(EMI MANHATTEN)
Aaaahhh!QUEENSRYCHE,they shouldn't be featured in BOULEVARD,I hear you cry, but wait,they are actually one of the best melodic rock outfits around having stripped themselves of their earlier MAIDEN fetish.
"OPERATION MINDCRIME" is the finest L.P.of its kind sinc PINK FLOYD releas -ed their "WALL"epic.As we all know,concept albums don't always work(are you listening STYX?)but GEOFF TATE and CO. have come up with a story that is as mind-grippingly terrifying as it is musically exciting!
The basic story concerns NIKKI who has awakened in a Hospital bed only to see himself on the T.V.screen.On seeing all the terrible things he has done he begins to remember it all.From this simple beginning the band take us deep into the mind of NIKKI in his drug induced state and over the next hour or so the tension just doesn't let up.
We won't spill the whole story to you,suffice to say that you should buy it now and if you possess a C.D. player then fork out the extra dosh as the productin(courtesy of PETER COLLINS)is amazing.
Honestly,with killer cuts like "REVOLUTION CALLING","THE NEEDLE LIES"and "I DON'T BELIEVE IN LOVE"this is a serious contender for'album of the year'.
Special mention should also be made of "SUITE SISTER MARY",the albums zeni -th.10 minutes 41 seconds of sheer bliss.A spoken intro featuring NIKKI(GEOFF TATE)and the evil DR.X(played by none other than ANTHONY VALENTINE)leads us into a musical exploration of NIKKI's innermost thoughts and emotions.A choir and rainfall effects kick violently into SCOTT ROCKENFIELD's unbelievable drumming(surely the most exciting drummer in the world today!).An absolutely raging track to complement an absolutely RAGING L.P.
Hmm,now if only,like FLOYD,they'd follow it up with a film!

MJA and IVJ

BEAU GESTE-ANOTHER NIGHT IN THE CITY(TGO)
Quite an interesting little opus this one.BEAU GESTE appear to be the brai -nchild of one BRYAN HUGHES who provides the vocals and most of the instrum -ents,bar the drums.Yet this multi-talented instrumentalist appears to be unkn -own.Not for long I assure you for as soon as I can get a human being on the phone(instead of the bloody answering machine)I will bring you up to date on his current activities.
Anyway,onto the delights of the platter.If you could conjur up an amalgam of BRYAN ADAMS,STAN BUSH and DAVID HALLYDAY(a new US hope,check out the awful "HE'S MY GIRL"movie for an introduction to his abilities)then you wouldn't be too far removed from the BEAU GESTE sound.
From the 1st track "TAKE THESE CHAINS" to the STAN BUSH-like rockers "CATCH THE FIRE" and"DON'T GO",this album oozes class.Great keyboards permeate the riffs and make for superb summertime listening(now all we need is a Summer) especially on the aforementioned "DON'T GO" and "RUNNING FROM YOUR HEART". The 1st side ends with the slightly repetitive "STILL OF THE NIGHT" which is still an above average track.

CONT'D

BEAU GESTE-CONT'D

It's when you turn the album over though that the true class of this album appears.The Pomp of the title track tells us of the jungle of the city at nigh -t,culminating in an excellent chorus and a natty keyboard solo.Following on is the superb "STRONG TONIGHT"which features a heavier sound than previously exhibited,highlighted by an amazing solo and guitar dominated riff."HEARTBREAK CITY" opens with an extremely DEF LEPPARD-like riff but when the song kicks in you would swear you were listening to prime time BRYAN ADAMS circa"YOU WANT IT,YOU GOT IT" or "CUTS LIKE A KNIFE".And in true 'leave the best till la -st' fashion we end with the albums highpoints."NO MORE HEROES"opens with one of theriffs of the year so far and features a chorus you'll be singing in the bath later.The discs 'piece de resistance' though is the last track."SHADOW ON THE MOON" really rocks out and yet shows a more lyrical approach than befor -e.Maybe this is the direction BEAU GESTE will take in the future.Let's hope so because this is a killer,featuring excellent,thoughtfull guitar and vocals (the guitarwork is exemplary throughout without ever being indulgent at any point)and hints at what the band may be like live.

So,what are you waiting for?Go out and place your order for this opus now and keep your eyes peeled for a feature on them soon.

MJA

IMPELLITTERI- STAND IN LINE(MFN)

In issue 1 we gave IMP's E.P. a good review so it's time to see if the L.P can live up to expectations.

The answer is an emphatic YES!Having roped in the best singer in rock(in my opinion) GRAHAM BONNET,owner of the world's dodgiest hairdo,and an impressi -ve backing band viz PAT TORPEY(DRUMS),CHUCK WRIGHT(BASS)and PHIL WOLFE(KEYS), IMP. has made a classic of guitar-orientated Melodic Rock.

The title track kicks off side 1,full of guitar flurries and brilliant vocals,the bass and drums gelling together like they've always been a team, really sets the pace.Following on is a very brave cover version,"SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE" and I'm firmly of the opinion that it's the best version yet of the old RAINBOW chestnut."SECRET LOVER"comes bursting out of the speakers next,sou -nding like a MALMSTEEN out-take(which is no bad thing in my book),only to be segued into the only instrumental,a lengthy workout of "SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAI -NBOW" on which IMP. absolutely burns!

Side 2 includes my fave raves "TONIGHT I FLY","WHITE AND PERFECT"and"LEV -IATHAN".Each coming on like ALCATRAZZ on speed.Every one a fierce track.

So if you like MALMSTEEN and ALCATRAZZ I'd recommend you to purchase this album at once and totally disregard any other reviews you may have read.

IVJ

YA YA-YA YA(ATCO)

Every once in a while a British group emerges that can challenge the Yanks at their own game,AIRRACE and FM were probably the best of these,but unfortuna -tely they recieved scant backing from their respective labels and failed mis -erably to score the success they so richly deserved.

But now we have YA YA,who apparantly have the full backing of Atco,and I'm quite excited by the prospect of us putting one over on the Americans.YA YA have already released one previous album "SCARRED",which I'm sure they would rather forget and now with their new vocalist SAM BLUE they've come up with an album not a million miles removed from the aforementioned FM and just a hint of JOURNEY in the harmonies.

"CAUGHT IN A LIE"sets the style for the whole L.P.Full of wonderful harmon -ies and blindingly melodic guitar.Next up is the 1st single "WHEN THE WORLD CRIED",a superb song,catchy but with real power burned into the grooves.Others worth looking out for are the amazingly harmonious "FEAR OF FLYING" and the totally brilliant "JULIA".Top this all off with the awesome production from th -e likes of MIKE CHAPMAN and STEPHEN GALFAS and you have a British group with all the igredient necessary to beat the Americans at their own game.So when it eventually surfaces over here be sure to help them out and buy it.It's set for a September release so you've got plenty time to save up!

IVJ

KING KOBRA-3(MFN)

They're back,sounding harder and leaner than ever,harking back to their 1st L.P.Dual guitars a-blazing and CARMINE APPICE's drums pwering each cut along like his life depended on it.The 3 new members,singer JOHNNY EDWARDS(who has the power and range to replace MARK FREE without to much noticeable change), LARRY HART(a good solid Bass player)and the most important additionJEFF NORTH -RUP(a songwriting axe-hero whose playing is the highlight of the L.P.).

The songs to look out for are the opener "MEAN STREET MACHINE"(sounding like an out-take from the "READY TO STRIKE" opus),"WALLS OF SILENCE(written by NORTHRUP),the GENE SIMMONS penned "LEGENDS NEVER DIE"and the awesome killer cut "BURNING IN HER FIRE"the perfect Melodic Rock track(according to MJA,any way).

So take a listen to the new look KOBRA,gone is the Bleach-blonde backing band and in come the professionals to solidly graft out an excellent melodic rock album.Check it out!

IVJ

ROBERT TEPPER- MODERN MADNESS(SCOTTI BROTHERS)

ROBERT TEPPER is a man who you will know(if you've heard his 1st L.P.anywa -y)can write and perform some killer melodic rock along the lines of MICHAEL BOLTON and RICK SPRINGFIELD,has done it again with his 2nd release "MODERN MADNESS".

It's along the same tracks as his 1st album and only time will tell if it will grow on me as much.He's roped in such mega musos as DAN HUFF(surprise surprise,MJA),GENE BLACK(GUITAR),MYRON GROMBACHER(DRUMS)and FERNANDO SAUNDERS (BASS)who all perform admirably throughout.

Killer rtacks have to be "THE UNFORGIVEN","WORKING UNDERSTANDING",with a great solo and chorus,the title track "MODERN MADNESS"and the awesome "SING FO -R ME"(perhaps the best thing he's written so far).Add onto this some brillian -t production from JOE CHICARELLI,and you have one hell of an L.P.

One gripe I have is that the cover is truly dull(almost as boring as "THE HUNGER"),but enough of that,as it's the music that counts and I have no compl -aints in that department.

IVJ

ALIEN-ADVANCE TAPE(VIRGIN)

As you no doubt already know,Scandinavia is producing some of the most amazing bands of late.What with EUROPE,FATE,TREAT and SKAGARACK all being high -ly raved about(and rightly so,MJA),it comes as no surprise to me when along comas another immense band from the continent who,incredibly,put even the abov -e bands to shame.

Now the band in question this time round are called ALIEN,with whom some of you may already be familiar,or at least know the name.

ALIEN I'll tell you now,are without doubt one of the most exciting bands to emerge from abroad in recent years,and with America and Canada currently struggling to produce anything that's really mind-blowing,is it any wonder that the current Scandinavian scene is completely on top.With a fantastic blend of melodic hard rock,fiery guitar play,wonderfully emotional ballads and perfect keyboards,ALIEN can do no wrong!

Already with a no.1 Swedish single behind them,a song called "ONLY ONE WOMAN",which incredibly doesn't even appear on the L.P.,they're fast becoming a much talked about band."ONLY ONE WOMAN",by the way,is a beautiful song, contrary to what certain people have recently said about it(for people read ASSHOLES,MJA)

The debut album will be released sometime in August,and should be preceded by a single "TEARS DON'T PUT OUT THE FIRE",which incidentally is an obvious choice.Eleven songs appear on the L.P.,all of which are superb and only need one play to have you hooked on them.Produced to a surprisingly high standard by CHRIS MINTO there's something for everyone here.

For the 'hard rock' fan there's "DREAMER",a song very much in the EUROPE mould as displayed on their excellent "WINGS OF TOMORROW" opus.Actually this is the heaviest track on the album.Take a listen to the solo which is quite stunning and would make MALMSTEEN quiver in his boots!

CONT'D

ALIEN(CONTD)

"BRAVE NEW LOVE"is simply breathtaking,surpassing anything recorded by Sweden's top 2 rock acts,EUROPE and TREAT.It really is quite sad that the US isn't capable of gems like this,of late anyway.

"DYING BY THE GOLDEN RULE","JAMIE REMEMBER" and "TOUCH MY FIRE"all continu -e in the same powerful yet incredibly melodic vein,"DYING BY THE GOLDEN RULE" in particular is another real killer with a stunning riff and a wonderful chor -us.Can it possibly get any better?Well "GO EASY"answers that.This has to be one of the top AOR songs ever recorded.It's a song that will remain implanted in your memory for many years to come.I'd even say it's as good as the 2 fines -t AOR songs ever recorded,namely BALANCE's "IN FOR THE COUNT"and TOUCH's "DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT LOVE IS?"(now there's a pair of real classics for you!) Yes this is an absolute stormer and the best song I've heard in years.As for the chorus,well it's simply the most memorable thing you'll hear all year.

And finally I must mention "MIRROR"the only ballad on the L.P.Soaring voc -als(like STEVE PERRY)on a track that's similar to JOURNEY's "OPEN ARMS"and "STILL THEY RIDE".Honestly,even the aforementioned giants JOURNEY would be proud of this themselves.

So I'll leave you with this.ALIEN have arrived,but don't take my word for it,just buy the album as soon as it hits the stores.

The album of the year!A true masterpiece.(and so say all of us,MJA+IVJ)

CHRIS LLOYD

NIAGARA-NOW OR NEVER(LADY ALICIA)

Whether you're a fan of European melodic hard rock or not,you have to hand it to them,they don't stop trying.Is there no end to this current overload of melodic rock coming from abroad.I hope not,'cos I simply love this sort of music.

Having only recently recovered from the marvellous "CHINA"and "TREAT"L.P.' along comes another one.This time unbelievably from SPAIN,of all places.I'll put your mind at rest immediately by stating that NIAGARA(great name)are not at all like the long lost BARON ROJO.No, NIAGARA are a long way above the like of ROJO.They don't play AOR,nor do they play Pomp,rather they play rather exc -ellent hard rock in the same style as recent Scandinavian acts but most sim -ilar to the Anglo/American act LION(which is no bad thing)

NIAGARA are 5 guys,namely TONY CUEVAS(VOCALS),V.M.ARIAS(GUITARS),ANGEL ARIAS(BASS),JOEY MARTOS(DRUMS)and RICKCASTENADA(KEYS).I feel that NIAGARA will no doubt have mass appeal to those of you who enjoy listening to the charms of LION,CHINA,SILENT RAGE and TREAT.

The L.P. opens with a short intro "FALLEN ANGEL",but before you can settle down with the cream crackers and tea,"WALKING" comes at you thick and fast with it's gigantic riff.Immediately you will be struck by the quality of the production(by CARLOS DE CASTRO,of the dreaded ROJO)and CUEVAS'exciting and very effective vocals."I WILL BE THERE"is a bright,bubbly rocker with an infectious hook and SILENT RAGE type riffs."TAKE MY HAND"to these ears sounds like TREAT with it's acoustic guitars and laid-back keys,thrown together with a punchy chorus.I just love this type of song.

The title track hints at heavier things to come,sounding similar to BONFIRE(circa "FIREWORKS")or STRYPER at their most menacing,while "I SHOULD BE STRONGER" is so heavy that I thought my Hi-Fi was going to explode!

The rest of the L.P. is a lot like LION and you simply can't help but enjo -y the lot of them as I did.

Hasn't European rock come a long way since those awful days of ACCEPT, MAD MAX and BARON ROJO?Well,if you're still sceptical,then check out NIAGARA 'cos this is where the future of music lies(part of it anyway)

C.L.

AINA -LIVING IN A BOYS WORLD(MERCURY)

Over the past month or so we've been inundated with female singers,ROSSING -TON,WITNESS and now AINA,a cute Melodic Rock vocalist.Her music comes across as a little more rocky than say TONE NORUM,which gives you an idea of the comp -any she keeps.

Side 1 begins with the silliest intro I've ever heard."THE YELLOW ROSE OF TEXAS"sung in Norwegian(yes,that's where she's from)which,thankfully fades int -o a great,catchy track entitled "ROCKS OFF","BELIEVE IN ME"is a wonderfully emotive ballad(written by PAUL JANZ)similar to TONE NORUM."YOU BABE YOU" is my favourite on the L.P.Written by that musical genius TOSTEIN FLAKNE(of STAGE DOLLS),a powerful Rock ballad with some great guitar provided by MARIUS MULLER "LIVING IN A BOYS WORLD" starts side 2 and you should all be familiar with it by now(it has already been done by WOLF+WOLF AND FIONA)but AINA adds a 'heavie r' feel."A LOVE FOREVER STORY"follows and what a chorus!It'll have you dancing in the aisles."I NEED YOU"and "PLEASURE AND PAIN"end the L.P.in superb style both are killer songs with great vocals.

AINA has come up with an album to challenge the FIONA'S and LEE AARON'S of this world,full of excellent songs,musicianship and production.A great buy!

IVJ

ROSSINGTON-LOVE YOUR MAN(MCA)

When I was a lad,this band were formed from the ashes of LYNARD SKYNARD and became a good-time Southern Rock group.But now with this L.P. they've become fully fledged Melodic Rockers which is evident even in the 1st tune "LOSIN CONTROL",full of biting guitar,swirling keyboards and DALE KRANTZ' vocals(and what a voice).You can feel it deep down that this is going to be fantastic."WELCOME ME HOME"(written by JON CAIN/NEAL SCHON/JIMMY BARNES)is a bit Country + Western meets AOR but is saved by the immensely heavy guitars. "HOLDING MY OWN"is also a tad C+W but with DALES voice soaring through the roof it's just magic.Side 1 closes with "ROCK ON",a killer song that sees GARY ROSSINGTON playing up a storm and DALE once again showing what a good singer she is.

Side 2's highlights include "STAY WITH ME",which starts with some nice keyboards from TIM SHARPTON that build into a perfect Melodic Rock song,"NOWHE -RE TO RUN",featuring some great Saxophone breaks,and "I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU",which ends the L.P. with all the instruments gelling perfectly in order to lift this cut to Classic status.

This L.P. is,to say the least,IMMENSE,KILLER,FIERCEand worth the pennies!

IVJ

STRYPER-IN GOD WE TRUST(ENIGMA)

STRYPER have done it again.Another superb Rock L.P. full of glorious riffs,soaring harmonies,killer guitar and smashing drums(but MJA disagrees)

The title track gets thing under way,blaming money for the hardships of man,with MICHAEL SWEET's vocals as good as ever.Next up is the current single "ALWAYS THERE FOR YOU" again SWEET's voice is perfect,he really is one of the best singers around."WRITING ON THE WALL" is a melodic giant,guitars building on a riff supplied by the drums and bass,and with a chorus that states;

"HE IS OUR GOD,CREATOR OF ALL
UNLESS YOU ACCEPT HIM,
YOU'LL CONTINUE TO FALL."

Who are we to argue?(pass the sick bag,MJA)

"IT'S UP TO YOU"is very probably totally ripped off from the "SINGALONG SONG"from "TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL"."LONELY"is the obligatory sickly sweet ballad to JESUS and if you've already heard "FIRST LOVE"you'll know exactly what this one sounds like."THE REIGN"ends the L.P.in fine style,a fast and furious song about the LORD'S reign in heaven.

All in all I like the album.To me it's just another STRYPER L.P. and I could listen to a newie every 6 months or so,no problem.

IVJ

SHOUT- IT WON'T BE LONG(FRONTLINE)

Let's face it,does anyone really give a damn about CHRISTIAN Rock?Can you in all honesty name a really great CHRISTIAN band,past or present.O,K, so may -be there have been a few decent acts such as STRYPER who've had a couple of good L,P.'s.The same goes for PETRA,whose last 2 releases have been fairly good but nothing exceptional.Oh,and IDLE CURE who had a rather neat debut L.P. out 2 years ago on the FRONTLINE label before packing it all in shortly after. None of these acts will ever go down as being one of the truly great bands of all time.

However,all this might change now with the release of the debut L.P. from SHOUT,one of the finest bands I've heard since WHITE SISTER first graced my turntable back in '85.Conjuring up a sound similar to that of say KANSAS,ICON, NIGHTRANGER and even PROPHET,I can honestly state that given the right push they could be the very first big CHRISTIAN Rock band.

Led,and formed,by ex-JOSHUA man KEN TAMPLIN,who has one hell (Shouldn't that be 'one heaven'?MJA)of a voice,sounding at times like a mixture of LOU GRAMM and FREDDY CURCI(SHERIFF),they play no nonsense hard rock with bags of melody and immense harmonies as album opener "NEVER STOP"highlights.If this song doesn't have you begging for more then you're not the fan of AOR you thou -ght you were.Then try "WINNERS OR LOSERS",which sounds like something ICON might do.A cracking song with a brilliant chorus deleting anything on the last WHITE LION L.P.

The title track is a stunning song with a wonderful acoustic guitar intro. Let me at this point say that the guitarwork is quite superb throughout,and so fluent,never more so than on the song "SHOUT",featuring a guest solo from LENN -Y CORDOLA(ex-GIUFFRIA).

If,like myself,you're a fan of great ballads,then "FIND A WAY"will appeal to you.Sounding,in some respects,like SHERIFF,especially vocally where KEN TAMPLIN excels himself and proves that he's one of the finest singers around at present.

I won't babble on any more about the virtues of this L.P.,just go and buy the thing.Every song is a gem and it's great to hear a band play so well.Now then,who was it who said CHRISTIAN rock didn't produce great bands?

CL

MESSANO-ADVANCE TAPE

Yes,we've all heard the name before,BOBBY MESSANO,guitarist for such acts as STARZ,FIONA,JOE LYNN TURNER and MARTEE LE BOW has put together his own band called,simply,MESSANO.

It features JIMMY CLARKE(drums),GARY CORBETT(guitars/keys),MIKE SEIFRITT (bass)and ex-RAINBOW drummer CHUCK BURGI,leaving MESSANO to handle Lead guitar and vocals.The guitar part he handles with his usual aplomb,but the vocals tend to be a little lifeless,although still listenable.

They begin with a re-working of the old FRANKIE AND THE KNOCKOUTS classic "CARRIE WHY?",now re-titled "TELL ME WHY?".Agreat song from start to finsh,but I miss FRANKE PREVITE's amazing voice.The PREVITE connection is strengthened throughout the L.P. with his co-writing of the 2 best cuts,these being "DON'T TELL ME IT'S OVER"and "FOUR PLAY"(?).There's also a cover of his old band STAR -Z classic "SING IT,SHOUT IT"which they totally mutilate by taking all the sle -aze out and turning it into a wishy-washy bland affair.My other fave cut is the excellent ballad "SLEEPLESS NIGHTS"on which MESSANO gives easily his best vocal performance,although tracks like "I'LL BE THERE"and"FIRING LINE"are wort -h checking out.

All in all,not a bad L.P.,in fact the only fault is the singing.My advice is to draft in a really great vocalist i.e. FRANKE PREVITE to sing then we'd really have an album of quality.

IVJ

PICTURE- MARATHON(CARRERE)

I had been awaiting this one with some interest as rumours were spreading

CONT'D

PICTURE CONT'D.

that it would see PICTURE moving in a new AOR direction.Add to this the fact that it also sees the baptism into the band of BERT HEERINK,ex-VANDENBERG,a man I've always rated highly as a singer and you can see why I was eager to investigate.

From the very beginning of the L.P. it's obvious that the collaboration has worked."BREAKAWAY"is a superb chunk of AOR and an excellent candidate for a hit,especially Stateside.Admitedly,the rest of the L.P. never quite comes up to the standard of this cut,but the other tracks on offer are no slouches believe me!

"DESPERATE CALL",for instance,is a scarf waving ballad in the same mould as EUROPE's "CARRIE" and features a great solo from ROB VAN ENKHUIZEN.Other wi -nners include "JUST CAN'T LOSE",which opens as a blatant FOREIGNER steal befo -re carving it's own identity,"DON'T KEEP ME WAITING"with it's MOTOWN beat and "SARAH"which comes on like an AOR version of IRON MAIDEN(honestly!)

The vocals and guitarwork are exemplary throughout,as well as being very thoughtful and melodic.Yes,I can definitely recommend the new look PICTURE to any fans of quality Melodic Rock like EUROPE,VANDENBERG and DOKKEN.Worth forki -ng out for,and I don't think it's exorbitantly priced either!

MJA

SKAGARACK-HUNGRY FOR A GAME(POLYDOR)

This is what all Melodic Rock should sound like,catchy songs,immense harmo -nies,outstanding musicianship and powerful production.

SKAGARACK are 5 guys from DENMARK who have put together a monster L.P. which takes up where the debut L.P. left off.The boys have spent ages,it seems putting together this album,writing some of the best songs I've heard ina long time(and getting their perms just right,sorry guys).

Well,enough of this banter,let's get on with reviewing the L.P.Opener,and title track,"HUNGRY FOR A GAME"explodes forth with a BONJOVI inspired riffand multi layered harmonies that seem to pour from the speakers,a winner all the way."SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE"also is a magnificent track.Swirling synths and TORBEN SCHMIDT's vocals combining to make a killer Pop/Rock song."SHE'S A LIAR" sounds like an out-take from the (late?)great HELLOISE,controlled power and fantastic playing from the whole band,SCHMIDT(vocals,songs,production,GENIUS!) ALVIN OTTO(drums),JAN PETERSON(guitars),TOMMY RASSMUSSEN(keys)and MORTEN MUNCH (bass).

Side 2 contains my fave raves though."TAKE ME HOME TONIGHT"with it's anthe -mic riff,powering drums and dance-along chorus,is an AOR dream and "ALWAYS IN A LINE"with SCHMIDT's immens vocals,PETERSON's killer guitarwork culminates on one of the best hooklines ever,nuff said.

SKAGARACK have come up with an L.P. of fierce Melodic Rockers that stand alongside any of the big names around today.Buy it and do yourself a favour.

IVJ

WITNESS-WITNESS(ARISTA)

Delete CHER,FACE TO FACE,FIONA and even the excellent ROSSINGTON L.P.DEBBI DAVIS has laid down the greatest Female vocals EVER on her debut.The only way to review the L.P. is track by track,so here goes.

"SHOW ME WHAT YOU GOT"is just about the ultimate opening track.Talk about grabbing the listeners attention,DEBBIE's vocals fly from the speakers threate -ning serious woofer damage,which is compounded by BRAD GILLIS'guitar solo.She -er magic!

"DO IT TILL WE DROP"takes the FRANKIE MILLER song,ties it up and stomps on it with high heels!Could that be BRAD again on guitar?

"AM I WRONG".At his point I should declare that it is my opinion that MICHAEL BOLTON(fro 'tis he who gets the credit for this ditty)gives away all his best tunes and this is no exception.Deleting anything on "THE HUNGER",this could be his best track to date.

CONT'D

WITNESS CONT'D

"DESPERATE LOVER".Written by I-TEN men STEINBERG and KELLY,this again dele -tes anything on their own L.P.(that should cause quite a stir with the wrinkl -ies,eh?).The guitarwork is totally stunning on this track,possibly supplied by TIM PIERCE(one of my all time faves)and the chorus is the ultimate AOR effo -rt.DEBBIE really blows the cobwebs out of the corners of the room that even CHER was unable to reach.

"LET ME BE THE ONE"is slightly more sedate but still excellent,this is what HEART would sound like if they didn't spend all day seeing their accounta -nts.

"I'M NOT YOUR LOVER".Hang on a minute.Isn't this the same song which apper ed on DALTON's excellent "RACE IS ON"1.P.It most certainly is!The strange thin -g is though that it was credited to BONJOVI/SAMBORA/CHILD back then and now 3 unknowns take the credit.Most peculiar,see ya in court guys!By the way,this version stomps all over DALTON's(and that was a good one!)

"JUMP INTO THE FIRE".At last,a chance to see what WITNESS are capable of writing for themselves.One of the catchiest keyboard hooks I've heard in ages bounces the track along like a ballsier WILD BLUE.Also featuring an amazing keyboard solo from JOEY HUFFMAN.

"FROM THE HEART"again sounds like the sort of song HEART should be singing but these days cannot even dream about.

"BORROWED TIME".The band are again credited on this cut,along with my all time favourite guitarist NEAL SCHON.Can my poor trousers take much more of this?A peek at the SCHON of old.In fact,I doubt if he's ever sounded this raun -chy.He sounds young and hungry again like a newcomer out to prove himself, rather than a seasoned campaigner.

"BACK TO YOU".A quick change of trousers later and another WITNESS/SCHON collaboration to end with.The chorus/mid section is made for STEVE PERRY,alth -ough DEBBIE aquits herself admirably.Once again SCHON's guitar histrionics threaten permanant speaker(and trouser)damage and only a desperate lunge saved my hairspray from being shaken off the shelf!(this is the ultimate test for an album)What more can I say?Buy,or I'll be forced to visit your home and play MSG albums continuously.

MJA

COMPETITION TIME

This issues competition is your chance to win one of 2 copies of KINGDOM COME on C.D.All you have to do is answer the question below and send off your entry to the address in the editorial to reach us before SEPTEMBER 20th 1988.

QUESTION:Which band did KINGDOM COME vocalist and mainman LENNY WOLF previously front ?

Please bear in mind that there is a special booby prize for either the stupid -est or wittiest incorrect answer!

Last issues competition winners were PAUL SMITH and S.G.BERTRAM who each won a copy of BELINDA CARLISLES "HEAVEN ON EARTH"C.D.

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CLASSIC CORNER

rpm:1st (emi 1982)

The early 1980's were surely the finest years for what is now generally known as AOR.There were many quite brilliant bands around at that time but unfortun -ately many of them faded into obscurity and it's only now that a few of these bands are back with us in some shape or form.Only a minor amount of bands arou -nd at the time have survived through those hard years and have since gone from strength to strength,these being FOREIGNER,R.E.O. and ,of course,JOURNEY. Gone though sadly were the likes of BALANCE,SHERIFF,ARCANGEL and possibly the greatest band of that era(and of all-time,MJA),the much missed TOUCH.

One band who didn't survive,which I have so far neglected to mention,for obvious reasons,is R.P.M.Believe me this band were one of the finest to emerge in that genre,releasing 2 L.P.'s before disbanding shortly after the release of their 2nd. "PHONOGENIC"(EMI 1984),which,although itself a fine L.P.,failed to live up to the expectations of their masterful debut.

Released in 1982 on the EMI label it is to this day one of the finest ever AOR releases.The line-up was BOB JOHNSON(VOCALS),MARK GENDEL(GUITAR),JIMMIE LEE(BASS,KEYBOARDS)and TOMMY WELLS(DRUMS),who specialised in quite glorious POP/ROCK songs with excellent hooklines and magnificent harmonies.

Some of the songs on the L.P.you may already be familiar with although you probably don't realise it.For instance if I were to mention the song "RENDEZVOUS",which was popularised by the TYGERS OF PANTANG in early '83 I think you'll get the picture.Actually,this original version completely out -classes the TYGERS effort with considerable ease.

It's hard to pick out any specific songs on the record as all the tracks on this marvelous piece of vinyl are all real killers and all sparkle with originality.One of these being the intense and sweeping ballad"IT DON'T FEEL THE SAME",which is without doubt one of the finest ballads ever recorded.In fact it still brings a tear to my eyes 6 years on!

Another tune you may be familiar with is "A LEGEND NEVER DIES"(remember th -is one?).Well let me jog your memory a bit,this one was covered by BLACKFOOT on their "VERTICAL SMILES"opus.Also,let us not forget "2+2"which appeared on the quite excellent VAN ZANT L.P. from 1985.

"YOU" and "FIRESTARTER"are also superb songs with superlative vocals(bett -er than mega rave MICHAEL BOLTON!)and amazing harmonies.Both are fine example -s of just what R.P.M. were all about.

"DON'T MAKE IT HARD"follows in the footsteps of the aforementioned "IT DON'T FEEL THE SAME",giving BOB JOHNSON the chance to use his affectionate and quite emotional voice to great effect.He really is Stunning!The whole affair is brought to an end by "I'M A WRECK"which is another masterpiece.

To sum up R.P.M. were a truly brilliant band who were not only good at what they did but were so refreshingly original with it,something very rare with todays AOR acts.Search out this Classic L.P. at all costs and hear for yourself what those 'early years' offered us all!

CL.

Playlist time.

MARK J.ASHTON	IAN V.JOHNSON	CHRIS LLOYD
1.FREELANCE-'88 demo	1.ALIEN-Prerealease tape	1.ALIEN-Pre release
2.ALIEN-Pre release	2.ZENO-'88 demo	2.THE CREEK-'88 demo
3.AXE-'88 demo	3.FREELANCE-'88 demo	3.ZENO-'88 demo
4.SKAGARACK-'HUNGRY'L.P.	4.MARATHON-Demos	4.WITNESS-1st L.P.
5.PICTURE-'MARATHON'L.P.	5.ICON-'MORE PERFECT UNTON' -Demo	5.BAD HABIT-Mini L.P.